Volume 6, No. 8 • March 12, 1999

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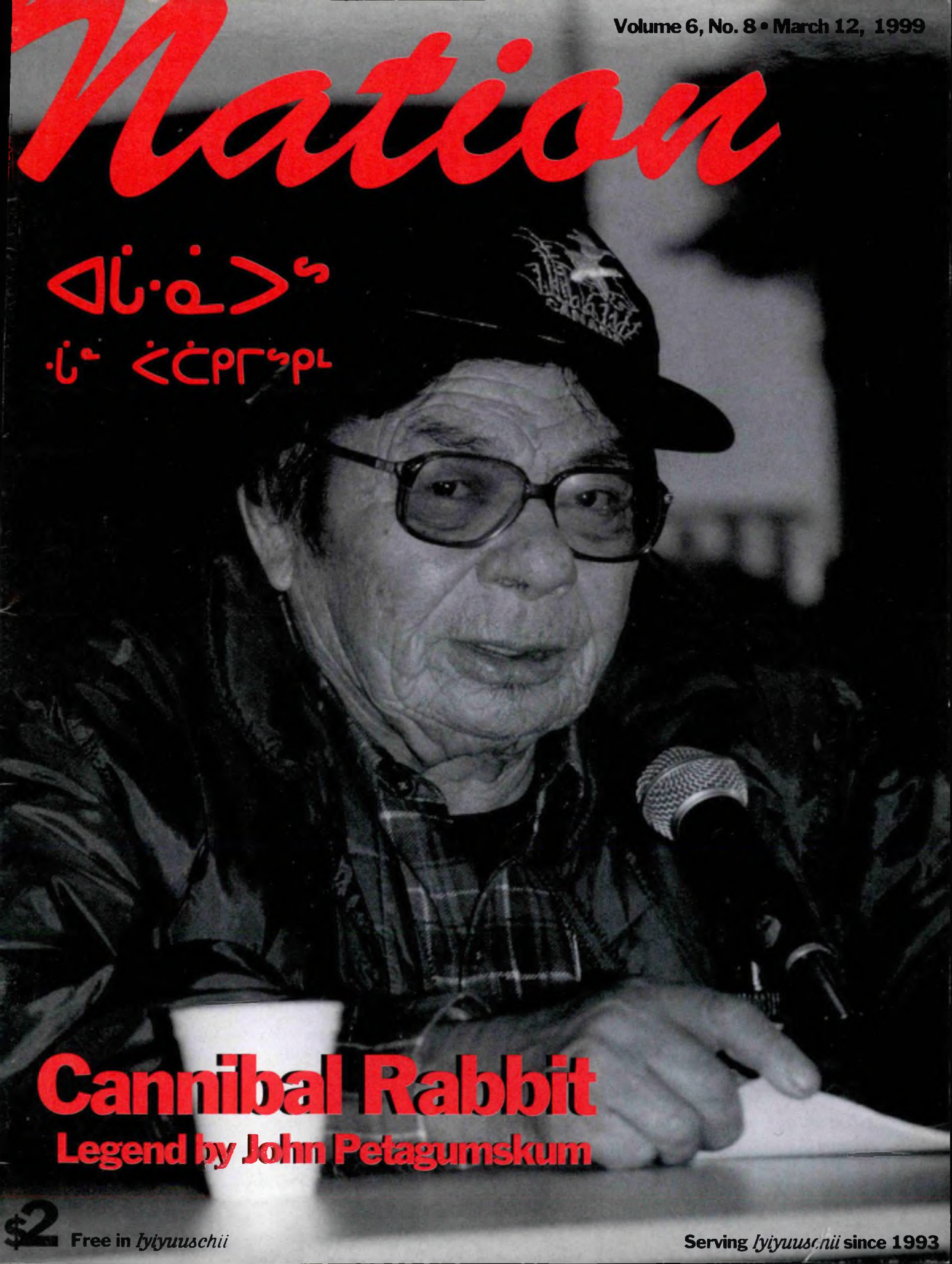

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EDITORIAL

NO RIGHTS FOR CREES?

I guess the moose crap hit the fan lately with Quebec Native Affairs Minister Guy Chevrette's letter to the Crees. Basically the letter is an ultimatum to the Crees saying they were negotiating in bad faith because they were taking Quebec to court over forestry and were planning to apply for an injunction to stop all forestry operations in the Cree territory until the matter was resolved (see News, page 5).

Chevrette told the Cree leadership in the letter that, because of this, Quebec would not be negotiating or talking to Crees on the Memorandum of Understanding. MOU monies fund essential-services projects in Cree communities.

You can tell the Quebec government subscribes to H.L. Mencken, whose claim to fame is when he said, "The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace in a continual state of alarm (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing them with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary."

The imaginary hobgoblin in this case is that it is impossible for anyone to talk or negotiate while in court. What a concept. It goes against the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states in Article 10 that "everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him." This is reinforced by Article 30, which says, "Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein."

Thus, it would seem the courts are a recognized manner of settling differences between peoples without recourse to violence. It would also seem the last time I looked the Péqists were looking for recognition of their right to separate and claiming it under aspects of the United Nations.

How droll that they would subscribe to one section to support their claim while denying another people the rights guaranteed in another section. One might almost think they were becoming the English menace while the Crees were becoming the down-trodden French.

Perhaps it is time that the Crees separate from Quebec. Can their actions be any less than what they say they have suffered at the hands of the English?

Aristotle once said, "Anybody can become angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way, that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."

In this case I applaud the Cree chiefs and Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come's reply to the insulting letter received from Quebec. They are understandably angry at the right people for the right reasons and at the right time. A denial of fundamental rights and the withholding of monies required to complete essential-service projects is not just petty, it is dictatorial and cruel. It is a situation that would have Quebec yelling bloody murder if the Feds ever attempted the same.

It's reminiscent of the old double-standard when adults used to tell kids don't do this while doing it in front of you. Kids didn't fall for it then and I'm glad to see the Cree leadership didn't fall for it today.

by William Nicholls

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John Petagumskum
See story, page 10
Design: Sylvia Tennisco

rez notes

by Ndiamon

Jems and Queeniesh sing "You are My Sunshine."

I was on a search for some long-lost explorer last week (details in a far-off issue). And what better place to go look for long-lost explorers than cash-poor Waskaganish. My search in cash-starved Waskaganish failed miserably when I almost died from exposure while completely stoned... on four Tylenols and a Codeine tablet.

I did get a chance to finally see the famous "dialysis machine walkers," though. They're the group of young people walking by snowshoe from cold Whapmagoostui to well-off Mistissini. So far, at the time of this writing, they have left debt-ridden Waskaganish on their way to fish-rich Nemaska. Someone estimates they'll make their destination in about 10 days.

I asked the lone female, Minnie Wapachee of electorally divided Ouje-Bougoumou, how it was being the only female with a group of 18 men in the middle of nowhere. She laughed and said it wasn't as hard as she thought it would be.

We first spotted the group walking Indian file across the Eastmain River towards the community from the plane. They were greeted at the shore by probably the whole community of Eastmain. All 43 of them. Just kidding. There was a dinner planned for them that night. I didn't stay since I wasn't invited, so I left on the next plane. Just in time to catch the grand opening (finally!) of the Youth and Elders Gathering Place in needy Waskaganish.

The youth of filthy poor Waskaganish have been waiting a long time for the centre to open. One barefoot Waskaganish youth complained that she would lose her youth status before the building went up. Somehow, some way, hard-up Waskaganish managed to get it up. There were of course the traditional opening ceremonies filled with feasting, dancing and singing.

Performers from across Creeland were invited. Robert Bobbish of Chisasibi, Rachel Brien of Mistissini, the band Migwin, Joshua Iserhoff and Catherine Cheezo of Nemaska, cash-poor Waskaganish's Francine Weistche and Christina Jonah, and Waswanipi's Glen Cooper.

The highlight of both shows had to be James Jonah and Queenie Stephen. Known as the Winnibeku Elders, James and Queenie perform as Jems and Queeniesh, two bickering Elders married to each other since time immemorial and nostalgiac for days even farther back. Anybody who knows and spends time with Elders will find their performances eerily realistic and hilarious. Their act is all in Waskaganishese and all imrovised. Queeniesh is everybody's overly affectionate grandmother and flirts outrageously in front of Jems with many of the young men she comes in contact with. Her old man Jems constantly reminds her of the days when he was better-looking than the young men of today while throwing insults her way. She comes back with screeching comments about him not changing his underwear often enough. She brings a washtub and washboard on stage and washes his long johns, holding them up for all to see. Jems will frequently interrupt her in mid-song and start it off again with his powerful booming voice. Jems thinks the government is all-knowing, quotes them often and believes everything they say. Queeniesh thinks "Arena" is some other old lady in town who's stealing attention away from her. "They always go see this Alena!" she exclaims, mispronouncing arena. "Who is this Alena woman?"

The following night Elders Glen Coooper and "Galine" Mianscum, from another Cree community, came to call. Jems and the Glen, as Elders do, traded hunting stories. Complete with embellishments, exaggerations and insults from Queeniesh. Queeniesh also shared the story of the first time Jems gave her a hickey and how much it hurt when he clumsily bit her. Added the visiting Elder Glen, "They say hickeys are a sign of love."

Speaking of love, the guy who proposed marriage on our Valentine's Day cover a few weeks back has been deemed good enough for marriage. Watch for the wedding story in a future issue.

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CREE-QUEBEC RELATIONS BREAK DOWN

Relations between the Quebec and Cree governments have broken down as a result of the *Mario Lord* forestry case.

The Quebec government recently took a hard line cutting off negotiations on the Memorandum of Understanding and a potential $117 million in funding, saying the Crees were negotiating in bad faith.

Native Affairs Minister Guy Chevrette wrote a letter to Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come on Feb. 10, saying Quebec would suspend the implementation of the 1995 MOU until all the chiefs meet with Quebec to discuss Cree intentions.

This means halting funding for basic services like sewage systems, as well as community projects like daycare centres.

Chevrette's letter left Cree leaders fuming. After meeting with chiefs, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come responded with a letter to Premier Lucien Bouchard calling Chevrette's letter "a threat, a provocation and a convenient excuse for the Government of Quebec for seeking to withdraw from its commitments" (see page 19 for excerpts from the two letters).

Chevrette wrote in his letter that he thought the *Mario Lord* forestry case had been suspended. The $600-million-plus Cree court case was filed last July. Last fall, chiefs did vote to suspend the case, but Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come refused to do so without consulting the people.

The court case stood. But at the time, Crees did agree to suspend a planned injunction on forestry activities, preferring to give Quebec six months to make meaningful progress in talks with Crees.

But those talks never even got off the ground, leading Crees to decide recently to finally file an injunction to stop forestry in Cree land. Chevrette wasn't too happy with this. He responded by suspending the MOU, including the coming fiscal year's projects.

But Cree chiefs are still wondering what happened to the funding for this fiscal year. Ouje-Bougoumou Chief Louise Wapachee said the last time she looked at the books, the band had only received about 30 per cent of this year's funding and the fiscal year was almost over. Some chiefs are wondering if Chevrette's letter is just a way for Quebec to get out of its MOU obligations. Others are saying this may be a test case to see how serious the Crees are about forestry and if they're united.

But whatever the reasons, Cree leadership is up in arms. The Grand Chief wrote that he was disappointed at Quebec's actions, but not surprised. He called the suspension of the MOU a "particularly insolent breach of Cree rights," and said Crees may launch a court case to get Quebec to live up to its promises in the MOU.

The hard-line stance is a collective effort, said Whapmagoostui Chief Matthew Mukash. "They have two options. They can ignore it or they can meet with us to clear up the process," he said in an interview.

Nemaska Chief George Wapachee said, "This could be seen as monetary blackmail on the part of the Quebec Government or a test to see if we're ready to trade land and Cree culture for money. We've never given in to that."

Phone calls to the premier's office and other ministers were referred to Chevrette's office, where no one returned repeated calls.

By William Nicholls

UNITED FRONT ON FORESTRY LAWSUIT

Cree chiefs are presenting a unified front on forestry, even as Quebec has decided to suspend the 1995 MOU and up to $117 milion in promised funding.

"Quebec has always tried to divide and conquer, but in this case we're all together," said Nemaska Chief George Wapachee. "We're showing you can't approach each chief with goodies to get what you want."

Whapmagoostui Chief Matthew Mukash is pleased Crees are standing together. "I'm glad we're fighting because forestry is as bad as the mega-projects for people living on the land."

Mukash said he feels what Quebec is doing is a form of oppression. He questioned why Quebec is tying the MOU to forestry in the first place.

Mukash pointed out that the MOU was negotiated due to the 300 breaches of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, identified in the Crees' $5-billion *Coon Come* court case.

"The MOU was linked to the dams, not forestry," he said. "They're trying to use this as leverage to stop a court case. It doesn't work that way."

Mukash said his community will discuss launching a public-relations campaign on forestry. "We'll offer our expertise and support on this issue. We're returning the favour for when they supported us on Hydro's Great Whale project."

Ouje-Bougoumou Chief Louise Wapachee said she felt Chevrette's letter is a violation of Cree rights. "We were penalized for exercising our rights and then they accuse us of not acting in good faith?" she said.

"It's almost like Quebec is acting like a dictatorship when it comes to Crees."

Deputy Grand Chief Violet Pachanos, who is also chief of Chisasibi, said, "It's wrong for them to use such things as essential-services projects that are urgently needed by the Cree communities as hostages to our 'good behavior.'"

Pachanos said the letter shows there are principles and limits that Crees will band together to protect, and forestry is one of them. "We are standing pat on this one."

-BY WILLIAM NICHOLLS

YOUTH PLAN INTER-TRIBAL GATHERING

The Montreal Aboriginal Youth Council has a lot of work ahead of it.

They're planning an inter-tribal youth gathering this June 26 in Kahnawake, complete with workshop and traditional activities.

They plan to have traditional dancing and story-telling, talks by Native rolemodels and a regular dance. They're currently on the look-out for Native singers and groups. Included in the gathering is the Mohawk Feast In the Forest, a feast of traditional Mohawk foods and culture.

The youth council says the gathering will reflect Native culture, traditions and respect. At the present moment the Youth Council is looking for sponsorship of this day-and-a-half event.

The youth council was formed six months ago. It offers help to Native adoptees searching for their biological roots, and a youth parent support group that

meets every Tuesday afternoon at the Friendship Centre, located at 2001 St. Laurent.

The council also organizes a free gym night every Friday for all ages from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 3711 rue DeBullion.

On Fridays, from 6 to 9 p.m., the council offers a drum night for those wishing to learn, practice or pass on songs. Dancers are welcome and people are available to teach traditional dances.

And every Wednesday, a Seventh Fire Youth Group offers games and workshops starting at 6 p.m.

The council also organizes healing circles and craft workshops, but you have to call the friendship centre for times and places.

The youth council is particulary glad that Ethel Blodin, federal Secretary of State, announced $100 million in funding over the next five years for Urban Multi-purpose Aboriginal Youth Centre Initiatives. The youth council and the friendship centre hope to see an urban youth center happening in Montreal in the near future. This federal program is a result of the growing number of Native youth in today's urban centres.

If you have a little time to volunteer or a donation for the gathering, give the Friendship Centre a call at (514) 499-1854.

-BY WILLIAM NICHOLLS

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WASKAGANISH FINANCES A MESS: AUDITORS

The Waskaganish band's finances are a in a desperate state, plagued by large cost overruns on major construction projects, numbers that don't add up and serious flaws in record-keeping, say auditors.

"Budget control and follow-up seem to be deficient at all levels," said auditors in a scathing report issued last July 24, just obtained by *The Nation*.

The report calls for what amounts to a complete overhaul in the band's administration.

Numerous projects "were undertaken without detailed approved budgets," said auditors. When a budget did exist, "the budgeted amounts differ substantially from the actual revenues received and the expenses incurred by most programs and projects," the auditors reported.

Auditors discovered that funds earmarked for certain purposes were often spent on other projects that had gone overbudget. So much money was diverted in this way that the band started to have cash-flow problems in its daily operations, auditors said.

In order to protect the funds of certain projects, band managers went so far as to hide band money in personal bank accounts - accounts for which the authorized signers were different from those of the band's. The auditors strongly cautioned against this practice.

The eight-page report, entitled "Waskaganish Band management letter," was prepared by Montreal auditors Pratte, Bélanger (see page 15 for excerpts).

The report could cause the band problems with the federal government.

Indian Affairs could end up stepping in and freezing a band's finances or taking back funds if money was diverted to purposes other than those intended, said Ian Corbin, Indian Affairs acting director of community development.

"There are steps that would be taken, in most cases, to recover the money or see that the intended project gets done."

In an interview, Corbin said he isn't informed on the Waskaganish situation, but in general the government could also withhold future funds until an agreement is reached resolving the problem.

The issue burst into the public eye in Waskaganish last summer after the band council decided take $450,000 in federal funds earmarked specifically for housing renovations and use it to cover the band's soaring debt.

Residents of 69 old homes have patiently awaited the renovations for many years. The houses are in bad need of repairs and some are so moldy it is causing health problems for some residents. Some have rotting walls.

Although the band has released no official figures, its debt reportedly stands at about $8 million. Of that, $6.3 million is within the band's "special projects fund," which financed items like a gravel pit, police, aircraft, tourism marketing, economic development, a lagoon and an account called "past inactive projects." The band's debt grew by over $1 million in just the last year, according to band documents.

by Alex Roslin

BAND DEBT BLAMED ON DISORGANIZATION

Waskaganish residents know the band is deeply in debt. But what caused it?

One problem is the same faced by many First Nations: not enough money to cover all the needs of a growing population.

But two building experts who worked in Waskaganish for years say a lot of the band's estimated $8-million debt is its own fault. They said major construction projects have repeatedly gone way over-budget due to a problem of disorganization at the band.

"The band has a lot of internal problems," said one of the construction consultants, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"They do not have the supervision. They don't have good organization. There doesn't really appear to be a spirit of cooperation," said the consultant, who's been active in the building industry for three decades.

"It has to do with leadership. When you know something about construction, you'll understand that 90 per cent of the problems have to do with the supervisors."

He said band employees who have new ideas or show initiative are discouraged.

"It seems like the whole idea of making changes is very difficult. Everybody is sort of for the status quo at whatever level. It seems that whatever intimates a change brings fear, rather than an openness to dialogue."

John Lorenzini, the band's head engineer and project manager for over 12 years, agreed that most major capital-works projects in the community have gone overbudget. The reason? Organizational problems, he said.

Lorenzini, who quit the band last year and lives in Sudbury, denied that there were any budget overruns or other problems on any projects he himself supervised, which were mostly related to housing.

But he said capital-works projects, like the recently inaugurated gathering centre, were a different story. The centre, for example, was "way over-budget" and past schedule, Lorenzini said.

Chief Billy Diamond, band treasurer Malcolm Moses and Michel Lalonde, a project manager on some local capital-works projects, didn't return our calls.

-BY ALEX ROSLIN

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PHOTO BY NEIL DIAMOND

The "dialysis walkers" arrive triumphantly in Eastmain Wed., Feb. 25.

HEALTH CONCERNS POUR OUT AT ASSEMBLY

The first-ever Cree special assembly on health and social services heard an outpouring of concerns about everything from diabetes to suicide and the housing crisis. And delegates didn't spare the Cree Health and Social Services Board from their criticisms.

Delegates came up with a list of 46 "major problems" that need greater attention, ranging from family violence to asthma caused by dust from unpaved roads.

Twenty-two of the 46 problems point directly at the Cree Health Board. They include: insensitivity to cultural issues by Health Board staff, high staff turn-over and burn-out, inexperienced staff, not enough doctors, language problems in hospitals and lack of mental-health support services.

Abel Bosum, coordinator of the assembly, said most of the Health Board's problems stem from a grave lack of government funding. "It's really no frills," he said.

Bosum said delegates called on all Crees to take ownership of their health and social needs. They wanted the Grand Council of the Crees to lend its political muscle to the Health Board's negotiations for more funding.

They also wanted a more holistic approach to health, and many said the Health Board has ignored traditional healing methods. There was recognition that community problems like poor sanitation and the housing crisis can't be separated from the Crees' generally poor health statistics.

James Bobbish, the Health Board's executive director, said the underfunding is bad: "It's not a rosy situation. I don't think we are adequately set up resource-wise to meet the demands in the communities. I can safely say most of our workers are stressed to their limit with their caseloads."

Bobbish said Health Board staff want change as much as anyone else since they see the problems first-hand. Bobbish and Clarence Snowboy, director of administration, toured the communities last year meeting with employees to come up with a vision statement, which got approved at the special assembly.

"Morale is quite high. I think there are a lot of employees who have been waiting to participate. They know the hardships better than anyone," Bobbish said.

The grievances with the Health Board were highlighted by Robert Weistche, chairman of the Cree School Board. He said in a speech that the Health Board has dumped much of its responsibility for children and adults with health and social difficulties onto the School Board, which doesn't have the money, training or personnel to handle the burden.

As an example, Weistche said the School Board must intervene in high-risk, abusive situations at home because Social Services "often provides very little assistance." He also said Social Services has failed to help suicidal students referred for counseling.

Privately, many Health Board employees are optimistic changes are coming because of the spirit of openness created within the board in the past year. They are hopeful the board's mostly non-Native middle management will see the assembly as a wake-up call. "As an employee it's good for me," said one health worker. "It's easier for me to come and make changes. It can really help our work."

See p. 22 for more details.

-by Alex Roslin

CREES SUE OVER OFF-SHORE ISLANDS

The Grand Council of the Crees has filed a lawsuit asking that the Cree off-shore islands in James and Hudson bays not be transferred to Nunavut.

The lawsuit, filed Feb. 19, asks the Federal Court of Canada to protect Cree rights in the off-shore areas, including hunting, fishing and trapping rights. It also asks that no development be allowed there until the Crees and Canada resolve the status of the islands.

The Cree lawsuit says Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart violated Cree rights and the Constitution by transferring the islands to Nunavut without Cree consent.

The islands, all within a few kilometres of the James and Hudson bay coasts, are now part of the Northwest Territories. They are scheduled to change hands once Nunavut comes into existence on April 1.

"We were very reluctant to undertake this action as we support Inuit claims and efforts to achieve recognition of their rights," said Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come in a statement.

Under the law, anyone hunting on the off-shore islands, including Crees, has to get an export permit to bring out food they've killed. The rule is enforced on Amiski Island, but not on the east coast of James Bay.

But that could change. "When you go into another province (with game), you require certain permits," said James Eetoolook, vice-president of the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., representing 20,000 Inuit. "So those may be required (of Crees)."

And to listen to Indian Affairs, this situation could continue for a long time. Back in 1978, Crees and Indian Affairs worked out an agreement on the status of the off-shore islands. But that agreement fell through because Indian Affairs refused a Cree demand for compensation tied to the islands, like Crees had received in 1975 for the rest of James Bay.

Twenty years later, Indian Affairs still has the same position: no compensation. "The policy is the same as in 1978 when the deal fell apart over compensation," said Nigel Wilford, a senior negotiator at Indian Affairs.

-BY ALEX ROSLIN

COVER

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Voices of the Elders:

ACHAANWAAPUSH

As told by John Petagumskum

I don't know what the other communities call it, but here in Whapmagoostui we call this legend Achaanwaapush ("Cannibal Rabbit"). He was a cannibalistic creature. He was a person with the features of a rabbit and he habitually slaughtered people.

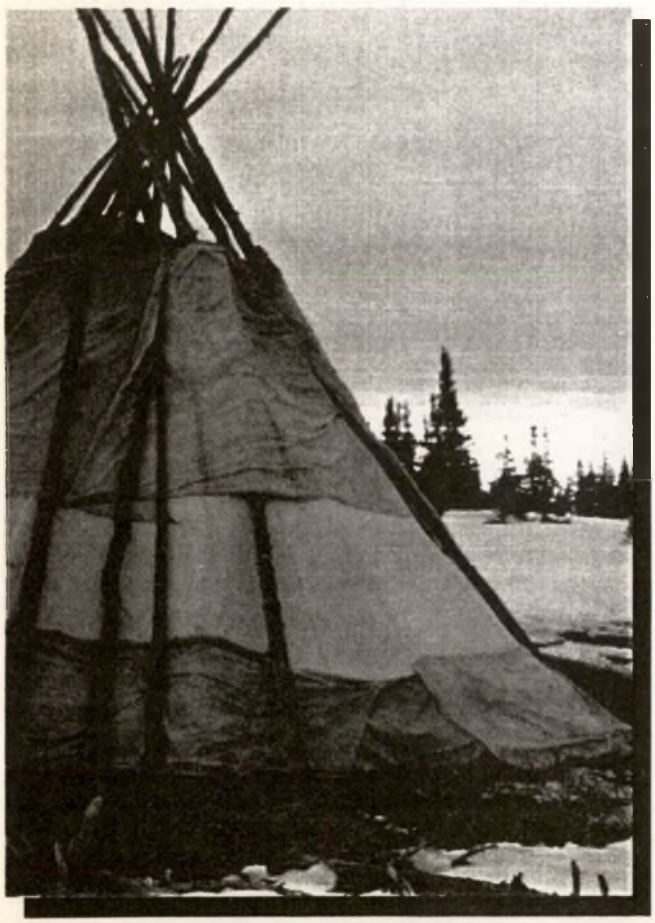
There was a family of Lynx people camped out on the land. One day, the Lynx adults were getting ready to set off for a beaver hunt. As they left, they said to their young Lynx children, "Achaanwaapush will reach our camp today." The young Lynx were forewarned about what would happen. The adult Lynx said, "When Achaanwaapush enters our teepee, he'll want the place warm and he'll want to be scratched and soothed. But make sure that you don't use your claws so Achaanwaapush will become frustrated and will want to be scratched more vigorously. After he tells you to scratch him more forcefully, rip him open along his ribs." The Lynx men left with their wives to hunt for beaver. Only the children were left at the camp.

During the day, the old Cannibal Rabbit reached the camp of the Lynx and entered the teepee. As he opened the door flap and saw the young Lynx children sitting around inside the teepee, he said, "Grandchildren, put some wood in the fire and I'll warm up and you'll scratch my back." The Lynx children agreed. They fed the fire and the place was nice and toasty. Achaanwaapush got undressed and told the Lynx children to scratch his back. The children began rubbing Achaanwaapush's back using only their paws. The old Cannibal Rabbit stopped them and asked, "What's going on? How come you're not scratching me? Let me check your claws. I told you to scratch my back. Do it with more force." The Lynx children agreed.

> "Grandchildren, put some wood in the fire and I'll warm up and you'll scratch my back."

The old Cannibal Rabbit laid down again. The young Lynx children put their paws along his spine, stuck out their claws and pulled down along his ribs. They ripped the Cannibal Rabbit's skin and tore him open. The Lynx children killed Achaanwaapush. As they joyfully butchered him, they said, "Our parents will eat the abdomen meat."

After hunting beaver, the Lynx adults said, "Let's go home. Achaanwaapush must have reached our children." On their way back, they saw the Cannibal Rabbit's trail leading to their camp. Just seeing his trail frightened them. The Lynx men told their wives to walk far behind. The Lynx men snuck up to their teepee as they got near. One Lynx man jumped in the entrance and the other pounced for the smoke hole of their teepee to attack Achaanwaapush. They believed that the Cannibal Rabbit had slaughtered their children, but the startled Lynx children said, "What are you doing? We've killed Achaanwaapush." The Lynx men were glad and said, "It's a good thing you did that." When the wives of the Lynx arrived, the rest of the camp was already rejoicing and happily cooking a feast of the Cannibal Rabbit. This is the legend that I heard.



Translated and transcribed by Brian Webb.
Voices of the Elders: **made possible with the assistance of the Canada Council.**

LES MINES

INMET

Corporation minière inmet
Division Troilus

Inmet Mining Corporation's Troilus Division is an open-pit gold and copper mining operation situated at 175 km north of Chibougamau. With 280 employees, the division has a milling capacity of 15 000 tons per day. Employees work on 4-3 or 7-7 schedules are lodged the mine's first-rate camp. The Troilus Division is presently searching for candidates to fill two positions. Director of Human Resources and Director of Accounting. Integral members of the management team, these two new members, working on a 4-3 work schedule (4 days of work followed by 3 days of rest), will be actively involved in the development and application of structures and procedures.

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The incumbent develops and implements policies, programs and procedures regarding the Human resources management, health and safety, training and development as well as salary and benefit administration.

Employment Requirements:

- Five to ten (5-10) years in a similar position is required;
- University degree in Labour Relations or Human Resources Management is a definite asset;
- Fluency in French and English are required, basic knowledge of Cree is an asset;
- Experience in cross-cultural environment is a definite asset;
- Knowledge of Word, Excel and Access computer programs are a definite asset.

Main Duties:

- The Director of Human Resources performs some or all of the following duties:
- Plans, organizes, directs, and controls the operations of the Human resources department;
- Oversees implementation of Health & Safety programs of entire division;
- Acts as Management's advisor on legal issues relating to Occupational Health & Safety;
- Forecasts human resource requirements in conjunction with other department heads;
- Oversees training and development and hiring activities;
- Oversees the Implementation of the Cree Agreement and follow-up;
- Develops and implements labour relation policies and procedures;
- Advises and assists other department heads on the interpretation and administration of personnel policies and programs;
- Oversees the classification and wage rating of the division's occupations;
- Organizes and conducts employee information meetings on employment policy, benefits and compensation;
- Acts as Chairman of the Labour Relations Committee.

LES MINES

INMET

DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING

The Director of Accounting is responsible for the commercial, general accounting, and general administrative functions related to the operations of the mine.

Employment Requirements:

- Five to ten (5-10) years in a similar position is required;
- University degree in Accounting or Finance is a definite asset;
- Accreditation by professional accounting organization is an asset;
- Fluency in French and English are required;
- Experience in cross-cultural environment is a definite asset;
- Knowledge Excel is an asset.

Main Duties:

The Director of Accounting performs some or all of the following duties;

- Plans, organizes, directs and controls the operations of the Accounting department;
- Plans, and administers accounting systems and prepares financial information;
- Develops and maintains cost findings, reporting and internal control procedures;
- Examines financial accounts and records and prepares income tax returns from accounting records;
- Analyzes financial statements and reports and provides financial, business and tax advice;
- Responsible for the management and follow-up of divisions' revenues from copper concentrate and gold bars;
- Manages warehousing activities.

Commentary

Inmet Mining Corporation offers a competitive wage and benefits package including a housing relocation program. Applicants are thanked for their interest but are advised that only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The Troilus Division encourages and is committed to Cree hiring. Interested candidates can forward their resume in confidentiality, **before March 19,1999, to**

Francois Fleury
General Manager
Inmet mining Corporation-Troilus Division
P.O Box 8700
Chibougamau, Quebec
G8P 3A9

UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

A FEW GOOD MEN

These are great days to be a Native. Things are happening all across this country that are putting us in the spotlight and much of it has to do with our love of the land, resource development in remote First Nations, traditional hunting and trapping areas, and our right to self-destiny.

These are not trivial issues and it is imperative that we are ready to deal with them with strength, humanity, open minds and flexibility. Personally, I am overwhelmed with the wide range of issues, their severity and the intimidating forces that drive them.

I am relieved to have discovered recently that, for the most part, we Aboriginal people are in good hands, with strong leadership coming from a network of councils, organizations and agencies in every corner of this country.

Recently, I was fortunate to attend a chiefs' meeting in Timmins, Ontario, where I got a first-hand look at how First Nations politics works. Our political system is to a great degree driven from the First Nations grassroots. If a political leader from a Native community has something to say to our grand chiefs, he or she is heard. Our Elders, many of whom are traditional people, also have a very important role in guiding the First Nations leadership. Like other political systems ours is not perfect; it has its bends and cracks and stretches every which way at times, with passionate input, misguided intentions and sometimes with sad and angry debate. However, I believe our system to be very democratic and I see it developing even more so as our communities become more healthy and produce leaders with a good education and strong foundations.

We can be thankful for leaders like Grand Chief Phil Fontaine of the Assembly of First Nations. I haven't met him yet, but I am impressed with what I have seen on television and what I have read in the media. It was great to meet Grand Chief Charles Fox of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. He is a strong speaker and has a lot of experience in First Nations politics. I was also very impressed when I met Regional Chief Thomas Bressette of the Chiefs of Ontario, who is also very experienced with the First Nations political scene, and Grand Chief Vernon Roote, of the Anishinabek Nation, impressed me with a strength grounded in a kind and open way. Grand Chief Lawrence Martin of the Mushkegowuk Council is another accomplished Native leader who in addition is a very creative person and an award-winning musician.

One of the things that stands out about each and every one of these leaders is their accessibility and, for the most part, the humbleness with which they fulfill their prestigious roles. What I mean is that anyone can actually approach these leaders and have their say.

Now that so much development is beginning to happen in remote First Nations communities, we need these good men to be the strongest, most fearless and most dedicated they can be. We need them to fight for our future, to remember the land - to never forget the importance of the land - and to take us forward in the memory of our ancestors. So if you ever feel isolated or out of touch or you are intimidated or need a hand to help pull our people up, get in touch with Phil, Charles, Tom, Vernon or Lawrence. They are just a phone call away.

- By Xavier Kataquapit

FINANCIAL ADVISOR/ANALYST

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

Review and analyze the investment reports and financial statements of Eenou & Eenuch;

Develop plans of short-term investments according to the criteria established in order to maximize revenue;

Review and analyze the loan portfolios and ensure that the terms and conditions of the loan agreements are complied with and enforced;

Analyze proposed investment projects received and prepared, identify the advantages and disadvantages and consequences of a member's decision;

Prepare amortization schedules for loans; carry out the necessary follow-up when a loan has occurred;

Monitor, calculate and invoice monthly for the use of the centralized cash management systems and the accounts of the different participants;

Review and analyze reports of the subsidiaries;

To establish and execute programs for the provision of the capital required by the business; including negotiating the procurement of capital and maintaining the required financial arrangements;

To assure protection for the assets of the business through internal control, internal auditing and assuring proper insurance coverage;

Prepare reports required for review by the members of the different Boards and Committees; carry out all other tasks related to the position and required by the members and/or President.

Please send your resumé to:

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MR. JOHNNY DIXON
Human Resource/Personnel
207, Opemiska Meskino
OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU, QUÉBEC
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CREE NATION OF CHISASIBI is looking for a **certified mechanic** who will be responsible for inspection, repairs, overhaul and maintenance of heavy equipment and other automotive vehicles owned and the property of the Cree Nation of Chisasibi. The mechanic examines and discusses with the operator and foreman the nature and extent of malfunctions or repairs required. Activities include inspection certification of vehicles, testing, diagnosing, dissembling, replacing parts and assemblies using common and special hand and power tools, machines and equipment. Will review work orders and discuss with supervisors. Will supervise and co-ordinate the activities of co-workers engaged in the repair and servicing of motor vehicles and other miscellaneous mechanical equipment.

The ideal candidate has a secondary school diploma and has completed a 4 year motor vehicle mechanic apprenticeship program. Previous work in automotive technology is required and must possess a motor vehicle trade certificate as recommended by Provincial Standards for all mechanics.

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Charlie Pepabino,
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Le titulaire du poste effectue le controle des teneurs, le suivi et la cartographie des excavations souterraines. Il assiste le géologue senior dans l'élaboration des programmes de forage, procéde à la decription des carottes ainsi qu'à l'interprétation des données. Il participe également au calcul des réserves.

Les candidats devront détenir un B.A.C. en géologie et posséder trois (3) ans d'expérience dans les mines souterraines. La connaissance des logiciels Prolog, Tralog, Lotus et Autocad serait un atout. Les candidats devront etre dynamiques, faire preuve d'esprit d'initiative, responsables et autonomes.

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"Deficient at all levels"

THE WASKAGANISH BAND'S finances were in serious disarray last year, according to an auditor's report (see News, page 7).

The band's auditors, Pratte, Bélanger of Montreal, found numerous serious problems in the band's accounting procedures.

They recommended many changes "to safeguard the Band's assets more effectively." Below we reprint excerpts of their report.

1. Budgets preparation, approval, control and follow-up

- The operation budget was approved late;
- Numerous projects of the Special Projects Fund and of the Capital Additions Fund were undertaken without detailed approved budgets;
- The budgeted amounts differ substantially from the actual revenues received and the expenses incurred by most programs and projects;
- Budget control and follow-up seem to be deficient at all levels.

We strongly recommend the implementation of the appropriate procedures for the preparation, approval, follow-up and control of the yearly operation budgets. ... The Managers must be accountable for the budgets under their responsibility. ...

"Bank accounts were opened under personal names with signing authorities different than those of the Band."

2. Cash management and credit margins

- Throughout the year, the operating credit margins were always used at their maximum capacity which resulted in an unusually high interest cost; ...
- The credit margins are intended to bridge finance the accounts receivable of the Band. However, due to the absence of funding of certain Special Projects and the cost overruns of certain Capital Projects, the credit margins are presently used to finance the accumulated deficits of these projects;
- The shortage of cashflow enticed some Managers to deposit the funds received for certain projects in individual bank accounts. In order to protect the funding of the project, the bank accounts were opened under personal names with signing authorities different than those of the Band. The funding received in the Band's name was deposited in those accounts and at times the expenses were paid by the Band using the regular bank accounts;
- Due to the shortage of cashflow, the accumulated accounts payable to suppliers, at year-end, were considerably high. As a consequence, the amount of interest charged by the suppliers was also quite high.

We strongly recommend (that)... the credit margins must be used strictly as a bridge financing of the Band's accounts receivable and not to finance the deficits of certain under-funded projects. ... We also recommend that the individual bank accounts be closed and the balances of funds transferred to the regular bank accounts.

"Budget control and follow-up seem to be deficient at all levels." Auditors slam Waskaganish band's accounting practices.

3. Accounts receivable

- The gross accounts receivable related to regular operations increased over the years... This is due to the absence of an adequate follow-up and collection procedures;
- The accumulation of the accounts receivable for long periods of time resulted in a considerable increase in the provision for doubtful accounts, due to the uncertainty surrounding the collectability of these accounts;
- An increase in the subsidies receivable, mainly in the Special Projects Fund, due to the failure to complete and submit final activity reports as required in the funding agreements;
- Various old unsettled claims with the affiliated entities and other organizations;...

We strongly recommend... the elaboration and the implementation of a complete accounts receivable procedure. ...

4. Accumulated deficits

... In the course of the past three financial years, the accumulated deficit of the Band has increased mainly because of the absence of adequate funding for certain Special Projects and the cost overruns of certain Capital Projects.

"Abnormally high amounts of cash on hand are kept at the office. This situation may increase the risk for theft and losses of cash."

We strongly recommend that the present situation be thoroughly reviewed and analysed in order to prepare, approve and implement a recovery plan... This plan should be in place as soon as possible. ... Adequate funding must be secured for all programs and projects prior to their start.

5. Housing construction and renovation cost

The total building cost of a housing unit increased from $150,000 in 1993-94 to $183,000 in 1997-98. The increase in cost was not accompanied by an increase in the funding.

On the other hand, for the past four years, the cost of housing renovations has greatly exceeded the available funding.

In both cases, the cost overruns were absorbed by the Band.

We strongly recommend a complete review and analysis of the housing construction and renovation cost. This should include a review of the methods employed for the purchase and transportation of material as well as the management of the construction or renovation sites.

6. Inter-funds transactions

... Due to the absence of adequate funding and the shortage of cashflow, mainly in the Special Projects Fund, the expenses of certain projects were paid using the cash available to other funds. ... At year-end, the total amount due by the Special

continued on page 17

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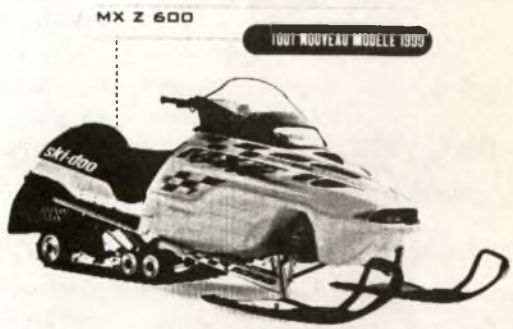

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Projects Fund to the General Operating Fund and to the Capital Additions Fund is quite high, without a foreseeable method for reimbursement. This situation is indeed having a negative impact on the general cashflow of the Band.

We strongly recommend that the use of inter-funds transactions be strictly limited and that adequate funding must be secured before starting any project.

7. Cash control: rental housing fund

- Amounts of cash and cheques are received and deposited without any consideration for the actual dates of cash receipts, their purpose and their origins. As a result, it is very hard to determine the cash position or the balances of the accounts receivable at any given time;
- The amounts of cash and cheques received are not deposited on a regular basis. Abnormally high amounts of cash on hand are kept at the office. This situation may increase the risk for theft and losses of cash;
- In addition to the collection of regular rents, the Rental Housing Fund collects the residential users' fees and the extra rents for the additional basement rooms. ... The absence of proper accounting records for these amounts makes it impossible to determine the total amounts paid and the balance owing by each individual;...

8. CSST provision

The Waskaganish Band does not have an accumulated fund in a specific bank account with respect to the CSST provision. Should a court decision be rendered against the Band, sufficient resources will not be available to settle the obligation.

9. Subsidiaries off-reserve

The investments in subsidiaries off-reserve are not recorded and disclosed in the Band's annual financial report. The Band should obtain the audited financial reports of these subsidiaries in order to disclose the appropriate information.

In addition, the Band should collect the amounts due by the off-reserve subsidiaries and establish a mechanism to receive its fair share of the profits generated by these entities.

10. Policy for administrative charges

These is no written procedure nor a policy that governs the administrative charges charged by the Band for the administration of various projects. ...

11. Rental policy: buildings & equipment

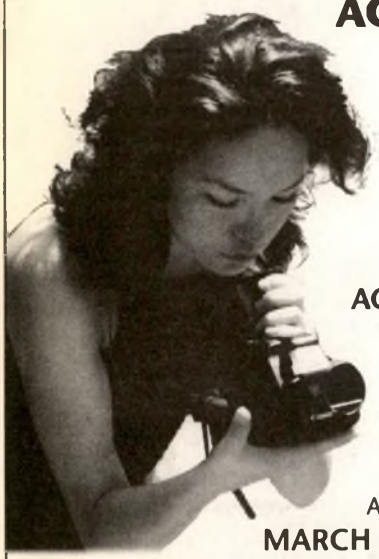
With the exception of the Rental Housing units, there is no policy nor a procedure governing the rental of the Band's buildings and equipment.

The rental charges are presently decided on an ad hoc basis by various individuals according to their interpretation of the situation at hand. In most cases, this leads to confusion and misunderstanding without any assurance that the rental charges cover the Band's real cost. ...

12. Construction material and long-term assets inventory

The actual system used to account for the inventory of the construction material is deficient, time-consuming and not reliable. ... It is very difficult to obtain an updated costed list of the Band's assets [buildings, furniture, heavy equipment, vehicles, etc.] or to determine whether or not they are adequately insured. ...

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION



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The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is pleased to announce that it is now managing Health Canada's Indian and Inuit Health Careers Program.

The Aboriginal Health Careers Program is open to all Aboriginal students enrolled in programs that lead to professional careers in health care, in fields such as Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacology, Radiology, Nutrition, Lab Technology, Clinical Psychology, Psychiatry and Health Care Administration.

There is one deadline annually: June 15
For more information or applications, call
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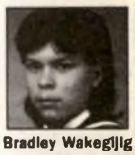
Toll free 1-800-329-9780
Or e-mail naaf@istar.ca

Shelly Michano
Nursing - Confederation College


Bradley Wakegijig
Optometry
University of Waterloo

Margaret R. Sebescen
Clinical Psychology
University of Manitoba

Sharon Keefe
Nursing
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College

Health Canada Santé Canada

Crees Always Fish With Cree Nets

Creenet is a Cree-Owned Company Operating From a Cree Community (Wemindji) and training Crees in Computor and Internet Skills.

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Wemindji	Air Wemindji	Mandow Tourism Agency
Ouje-Bougoumou	Radisson	Besuum Petroleum
Moosonee Transport	Kepa Transport	
James Bay Cree Telecommunications Society		

Is your organization, your community or are you on **Creenet**?

If we don't support our own companies, who will?

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GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EEYOU ASTCHEE)
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EEYOU ASTCHEE)

ᐊᐢᐢᐤ ᑕᕀᑭᒪᓕ
CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATION REGIONALE CRIE

A THREAT, A PROVOCATION AND A CONVENIENT EXCUSE

There has been a tense exchange of letters between Native Affairs Minister Guy Chevrette and Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come about the Cree forestry lawsuit (see News, page 5). Here we reprint excerpts (Chevrette's letter is translated from French). For those wishing to see the complete and untranslated versions of these letters we recommend seeing your local chief or band council.

Monsieur le Grand Chef,

The Quebec Government has always been open and active regarding issues with the Crees. We have made significant progress together since we signed, on March 27, 1988, the Agreement on the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding of May 23, 1995. ... All these negotiations were transparent and held in good faith with your chief negotiator, Billy Diamond.

Considering that our negotiations had produced conclusive results... I was under the impression that measures would be taken to suspend legal proceedings in the case of Mario Lord et al. v. Attorney General of Quebec et al., thus enabling our negotiators to continue with their work unimpeded.

However, it has come to my attention that not only have the proceedings in the Mario Lord case not been suspended but the Crees intend to file for an interim injunction to stop forestry operations. You will understand that it is becoming increasingly difficult, not to say incompatible, to continue negotiating while the Cree side is placing emphasis on legal proceedings undertaken, in particular, against the Quebec government. It is time to choose.

[He proposes to meet all the chiefs to discuss this.] Until this meeting is held, I feel it is best to suspend the implementations of the May 23, 1995, Memorandum of Understanding. ... Please be assured that I remain attentive to the needs of the Cree people.

Guy Chevrette

...

Dear Mr. Premier and Ministers:

On behalf of the Cree Nation, I wish to respond to Minister Chevrette's letter to me dated February 10, 1999.

This letter could have a very significant impact on Cree-Quebec relations. ... At the outset, we must express our disappointment, although not our surprise, in regard to some of the positions in Minister Chevrette's letter, which are obviously unacceptable to the Cree Nation. ...

While Minister Chevrette mentions a number of meetings in various sectors relating to the MOU of May 1995... the Government of Quebec indicates that it is prepared to unilaterally breach these agreements. The ostensible reason given is his interpretation of the discussions of June and September 1998, relating to the Mario Lord forestry hearings.

The Quebec Government is well aware that access to the courts is a fundamental right of the Crees (as well as a fundamental human right) which your government cannot prevent. ... Negotiations and legal proceedings are not incompatible, not unusual and not an obstacle to sincere negotiations. The Supreme Court of Canada decision in Delgamuukw, at the same time as it endorsed negotiated settlements, recognized the important role of the courts in having Indian rights respected.

Moreover, the 1995 MOU and the 1998 implementation agreements specifically provide that they have been negotiated and concluded without prejudice to the positions of any of the parties regarding their respective rights and obligations under the JBNQA and elsewhere. ...

Minister Chevrette's letter to us a threat, a provocation and a convenient excuse for the Government of Quebec for seeking to withdraw from its commitments pursuant to the 1995 MOU and the 1998 implementation (raising the obvious question of whether the government of Quebec had the intention to carry them out in the first place). ...

Should the Government of Quebec refuses to carry out its obligations and commitments pursuant to the MOU and MOU implementations agreements, it is our present intention to institute specific legal proceedings relating to this particularly insolent breach of Cree rights. ...

[He writes that Quebec hasn't had any "meaningful or substantive negotiations" on forestry with the Crees. Forestry operations are still going on: 1,600 sq. km was clearcut this year alone, with 15,000 sq. km allotted to forestry companies since the 1995 MOU.] ...

The Cree leadership is rather surprised that the Government of Quebec persists in requesting the Crees to suspend the Lord proceedings while making few attempts to meet the deadline of March 31, 1999, for tangible results on the forestry issues, while proceeding with the process to update the Forest Act with little Cree input, while it is on the verge of approving new 25-year management plans without the consent of the Crees, and while the Government of Quebec allows forestry companies to continue with expansion of forestry roads in Eeyou Istchee in striking breech of Section 22 of the JBNQA. ...

Cont'd on page 21

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FORESTRY CASE

Cont'd from page 19

Since the Government of Quebec has chosen to indicate its demands in writing, we wish to make the following immediate demands respecting forestry:

1. The Government of Quebec should commit itself to a comprehensive agreement with the Cree Nation on forestry...

2. The current process respecting revisions to the Forest Act should be suspended immediately pending the completion of this comprehensive agreement.

3. No additional 25-year forest-management plans relating to Eeyou Istchee should be approved without the consent of the Cree Nation. ...

4. All forestry operations affecting Eeyou Istchee should be immediately suspended unless and until there is a comprehensive agreement between the Quebec Government and the Cree Nation on forestry operations and activities in Eeyou Istchee.

5. During the negotiation on a new comprehensive agreement, Quebec must commit itself to respect the present provisions relating to forestry in the JBNQA, including the application of environmental and social-impact assessments and the general provisions of the environmental and social regime in the JBNQA to any forestry operations consented to by the Crees.

6. The mandate of the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment regarding forestry exploitation and management must be respected and the Committee provided immediately with additional resources to carry out its important mandate.

Before closing, we note we have been awaiting the Quebec Government's response on a number of these issues since late 1997.

We intend to follow the direction of the members of the Cree Nation to take the measures required to have Cree rights relating to Eeyou Istchee and forestry operations respected once and for all.

For obvious reasons, this letter is without prejudice to Cree rights and the Cree positions in various court proceedings. ...

Yours very truly,

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come

Internal and External Posting

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Cree School Board
Commission scolaire Crie

Open Position: Administrative Officer
Competition Number: MIS 879
Location of Work:
Mistissini - Administrative Centre

Nature of Work

The position of Administrative Officer consists of carrying out management functions required to administrate technical and administrative activities for the Financial Services.

Characteristic Functions

- Does the technical preparation of the budget;
- Manages the use of the money within the approved budgets;
- Prepares accounting entries;
- Compiles and analyses different statistics;
- Does the reconciliation of suppliers accounts and bank reconciliation;
- Maintains funding for capital projects;
- Analyses balance sheet accounts;
- Assumes all other responsibilities related to the functions as given by the superior.

Required Qualifications

- To hold a college diploma with an appropriate option;
- To speak and write English and French;
- The knowledge of the Cree language is essential.

Employment Conditions

Regular, full-time position
35hrs./week
Salary and employment benefits as per the by-law for the School Board's managers.

Beginning of Employment

As soon as possible

Please forward your applications to:

PERSONNEL SERVICES
CREE SCHOOL BOARD
203 Main Street
Mistissini, Québec, G0W 1C0
Fax: 418-923-2073

Always mention the competition number: MIS-879

Posting Date **March 3, 1999**
End of Posting **March 23, 1999**

IT'S A CREE NATION ISSUE

The Cree Nation has to take ownership of its health and social needs, and not just leave them to the Cree Health Board.

That's the consensus that emerged out of the Special General Assembly on Health and Social Services (see News, page 9).

"It's a Cree Nation issue," said Abel Bosum, coordinator of the assembly. "Health is everybody's problem." We caught Bosum as he was putting the final touches on his report. He broke down the delegates' comments into six "main grievances" and seven "major problem areas."

GRIEVANCES

1. The Health Board is underfunded.

2. The feds and Quebec don't recognize Cree jurisdiction over health, like they did with education. "This meant the Health Board has always been the slave of rules established by Quebec," Bosum said. "The funding is tied to these rules. Therefore, innovation was not possible."

3. Cree entities don't work together on health. "They simply don't communicate."

4. Delegates complained of "inefficient and insensitive programming that does not reflect Cree needs," said Bosum.

5. No Cree control. "Crees felt they had not taken charge of their own health problems. They were more the delivery agents for Quebec-designed programs."

6. "The health side of the Cree Health Board should not overwhelm the social side. Delegates felt the social side was a sideline, never given the proper priority."

MAJOR PROBLEM AREAS

1. Crees lag behind the rest of the province in social and health conditions "and are border-line with Third World conditions," Bosum said. The culprit: again, lack of money.

2. No long-term objectives. "We have no health and social development. What we have instead is health and social management," said Bosum.

3. Public health issues. Delegates said people with special needs may need priority on housing waiting lists; housing design should be accessible to those with disabilities; schools should emphasize phys. ed.

4. Environmental-health problems. Mercury and other pollution are still a problem; sanitation is poor.

5. The Cree Health Board's programs have a lot of deficiencies. "Employees are generally close-minded about traditional healing," Bosum said. Also, "The system reacts but does not prevent." Programs should be regularly re-evaluated with public input. Delegates supported the Health Board's policy of maintaining non-insured benefits, like dental and eye care.

6. Capital needs. Nearly all band funds are spent on day-to-day operations, while equipment and facilities like housing and sanitation fall into disrepair. This impacts directly on health and social well-being.

7. Cree leadership. "There should be recognition of the Cree law-making capacity in health and social services," Bosum said. "There's plenty of Cree innovation. We need to tap into it and implement our own solutions." The Grand Council of the Crees was asked to help the Health Board get more money and seek implementation of promises in the James Bay Agreement.

-BY ALEX ROSLIN

On the inside

It may take more than extra money to fix the Cree Health Board, according to some of its employees. They say the Health Board's largely non-Native middle management has a "backwards" mentality, wastes a lot of money and is very resistant to change.

When James Bobbish took over as the board's executive director in 1992, he had to make many reforms, including reeling in a large deficit, getting rid of problem staff and taming an out-of-control administration.

"Some policies hadn't been approved by the board, but were made by the administration for the benefit of the administration," said one employee. "The privileges of the managers had to be restricted."

But some of the old ways remain, said another employee. Money is wasted on patient and staff travel because of poor planning and abuses, he said: "Staff find an excuse to travel." Other complaints: staff housing "is in despicable condition"; some non-Native managers are "prejudiced" against Crees; and "everything is very disorganized." Employees were optimistic that the assembly will lead to reforms, so long as a proper follow-up is done. *-A.R.*

The vision statement

The Special General Assembly approved a vision statement for the Cree Health Board for the first time. It goes like this:

The Eeyou Nation of Eeyou Istchee is committed to developing responsible communities in such a way as to result in:

- individuals who are well-balanced emotionally, spiritually, mentally and physically;
- families which are in harmony;
- communities which are supportive, responsive and accountable;
- a healthy environment which will continue to produce traditional resources;

all within a context of a strong national Eeyou government which exercises complete jurisdiction and control over the delivery of quality health and social services, promotes Cree human resource development and applies resources to address our needs with a strong expression of the Cree values of respect, caring and sharing.

Robert Weistche

Robert Weistche, chairman of the Cree School Board, has levelled a number of serious criticisms at the Health Board.

He said the Health Board has dumped much of its responsibility for people in need onto the School Board. Some examples:

The School Board is now handling many social services cases due to the Health Board's "lack of response," Weistche said. "It often seems that any referral we try to make, for valid social and family reasons, is sent back to us."

In the case of one student with cerebral palsy, the School Board had to provide all the care, including assessment by a Montreal specialist and medical exams.

Weistche said Youth Protection workers have no policies to guide them.

He also said a third to one-half of the students in the School Board's Shiwaimakinch special-needs program in Chisasibi are above the legal age where they can be cared for by the School Board.

"Because there are no community programs organized by the Cree Health Board for these students, they are condemned to going to school forever." *-A.R.*

Hey there everyone, how's things going? Been gone for a bit. You know how it is.

Aight.. just got some things to cover here. I'd like to start with something which some of you are familiar with, something I've covered in past columns that I'd like to touch on. I've seen some students who "have finished their work" online. You know who you are. Well, I just want to answer something which was said to me one day. I saw a couple of Crees online one time and I said hi to them. Right away he/she/they wanted my A/S/L along with my name. Whoa... what the heck is A/S/L you may ask. Well in VP'ese it means Age/Sex/Location? I guess it puts a perspective on things, but if I or anyone for that matter don't want to volunteer some or most of that information please do not take that as an insult. I am just being a little cautious and I am not ignoring you even if I do not reply right away; I may be talking with other people. Your reply is next on my list.

Also try to hook up with other students and such to get the ball rolling in the inter-community communications department. It's a good way to communicate. In today's column I'm putting in an email that I recieved which I thought would be good to share with you guys. I asked ishgooda, the originator of the email, whether I could put it in the column. So with the blessings of ishgooda, I urge you to read the following and decide how you want to proceed with it.

Till next time...

lyiyuu@mail.com

LETTERS TO CLINTON URGENTY NEEDED

Our letters are really working. We are getting complaint calls about the amount of mail, faxes and phone calls that are coming in about Leonard Peltier's case.

Today the Canadian Embassy called because of all the mail and faxes. Canadian Justice Minister Anne McLellan's office also reported that they are getting flooded with mail. Ms. Kathleen Hawk, Director, Bureau of Prisons, and Warden Booker (of Leavenworth Prison, where Leonard is a guest) have also been telling people that they are getting overwhelmed by the correspondence on behalf of Leonard.

Please keep writing. At this time letters and faxes to President Bill Clinton and his assistant in charge of Executive Clemency, Charles Ruff, are URGENTLY needed. Please ask your friends, family and associates to take this time to make it a priority to contact the President and urge him to grant Executive Clemency. Organize a letter-writing party. A number of prominent Democrats believe that this is the most likely time for Clinton to grant clemency. Now that the impeachment hearings are over we have been told that we must step up the pressure during the next few weeks.

SAMPLE LETTER TO CLINTON

The Honorable President
William Jefferson Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500
Phone 202-456-1414
Fax 202-456-2461

Dear Mr. President Clinton, I am writing to say how relieved I am that the impeachment hearings are over. Now that the terrible ordeal has passed, please grant Native American activist Leonard Peltier executive clemency. I know you must share my concern for an innocent person such as Mr. Peltier, who is suffering life in prison for a crime he did not commit. Leonard Peltier has been incarcerated now for 23 years despite the fact that the government has conceded on numerous occasions that it does not know who is responsible for the deaths of the agents or what part Leonard Peltier may have had in them. I am adding my voice to those who have been requesting that you free Leonard Peltier.

While the impeachment hearings were consuming much of your time many international human-rights organizations have urged you to look into the case of Leonard Peltier. On February 11, 1999, the European Parliament passed a resolution (B4-069,0175,0179 and 0199/99) insisting that you grant Mr. Peltier executive clemency. Amnesty International also urged you to review the case of Leonard Peltier as part of its campaign against human-rights violations committed by the United States. This December Leonard's case was featured at the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in Paris. Now that the impeachment hearings are over I know that you will listen to the many millions of people who are asking you to free Mr. Peltier.

I strongly urge you to do the right thing and grant executive clemency to Leonard.

CLEMENCY:
President Bill Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington DC 20500
202-456-1111

cr your clemency letters to:
U.S. Pardon Attorney
Roger C Adams
500 First Street NW
Suite 400
Ref: Leonard Peltier #89637-132
Washington DC 20530
202-616-6070

Charles Ruff
G1
725 17th St. NW
Washington DC 20503

HEALTH CONCERNS
Ms. Kathleen Hawk
Director, Bureau of Prisons
320 First St. NW
Washington, DC 20534
Fax: (202) 514-6878
Phn: (202)307-3198

Warden Booker
Leavenworth Federal Prison
Box 1000
Leavenworth, KS 66048

Please release the EXTRADITION REPORT
The Honorable Anne Mc Clellan, Member of Parliament
Minister of Justice
The House of Commons
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6
(613)992-4524
fax (613) 996-4516

Thanks to ishgooda for the info.

Tsonkwadiyonrat
(We are ONE Spirit)
Unenh onhwa'
Awayaton
http://www.tdi.net/ishgooda/

THE CREE NATION BEARS 98-99 SEASON

Here's some news for all the Cree Nation Bears fans - fans of our regional team, our pride, our hope, our future... still hanging in there with a few less players than at the beginning of the season!!!

Now, I don't intend to do a trial of the boys who left the Cree Nation Bears... but instead I would like to send my admiration to the ones remaining with the team... It took a lot of courage, determination, discipline, effort, "love for the game of hockey," and most of all, commitment!

Here's an update on your Cree Nation Bears: Byron Sam, David Neeposh, Naaman Cooper, Randy Weistche, Robie Metabie, Emmanuel Blacksmith, Travis Grant, Jeremy Jolly-Gull, Jarris Blacksmith, Greg Blackned, Christopher Swallow, Ian Stewart.

As of March 1st, the Cree Nation Bears were still undefeated. They played Game 20 against Chibougamau. The final score for the Bears was 8-2. Playing for the Bears were two goalies and nine players. At the end of the first period one of the Bears was penalized for the game, leaving the remaining eight to continue play for the next two periods. Playing an outstanding game for the Bears was David Neeposh (2 goals 1 assist), Namaan Cooper (2 goals, 2 assists) Travis Grant (1 goal, 1 assist), Ian Stewart (1 goal), Christopher swallow (1 goal) and Jeremy Jolly Gull (1 goal). In net for the Bears was Greg Blackned from Moose Factory. Chibougamau's team played with three lines.

You haven't heard much about the Bears since late January because they haven't played many regular season games since, only applying into tournaments over the past several weeks. Such a lengthy break in between was a result of scheduling difficulties with other teams who, for various reasons, were unable to play. The remaining schedule has left them with eight games most of which are on the road.

The league will participate in a tournament on March 19-21 in Lasarre. This tournament will bring all the teams together for a final matchup. The finalists from the event will go to the Provincials to represent Abitibi-Temiscamingue in the Bantam CC division. The Provincials(Chrysler Cup)will be held in Rimouski on April 9-11. For a team that has won 20 games straight this tournament is not really in its favor, but, you cannot predict how successful a team will be at the start of the season. When the vote for the regionals took place all the teams were on even ground and we along with the other teams are in acceptance of this tournament.

What the Bears need to do for the balance of the season is to be consistent and to continue to give 100 percent. They know who their opponents are have played them all before. It is now a game of will, mind and body.

Now that their ranks have been trimmed, the players and goalies have demonstrated what loyalty to a team is all about. The desire to play and stay is what all teams look for in players.

Those who have been to any Bears games often see a lone figure behind the bench, the head coach of the Cree Nation Bears. The all round head coach of the year, Steve Cheechoo, has given his time to help the players of this team gain the skills they need to be competitors. He has passed on his experience and knowledge of hockey to the youth of the Cree Nation. Steve is many things to the players: head coach, driver, stick boy, water boy, equipment manager, chaperone, trainer, the list goes on.

In comparison to the other teams' benches that usually have two or three people helping, the Bears have been under staffed. Coaches on any team need help from trainers, assistant coaches, volunteers, etc. so that they are able to manage what is happening on the bench and on the ice. Coaches need time to put drills together, set up the lines and to keep track of each player's progress. He has to meet the needs of his players and also keep in mind the overall health of the team. The coach for the Bears is not someone who is interested in the team only because his child is a player on the team(not the case), he is someone who wants competitive hockey available to Cree youth and that these youth are able to play hockey in their own territory for their own people. He is someone who knows what is like to leave home at a young age to play hockey. In some cases living in a community that is not very accepting of native people and, needless to say, native hockey players.

Many thanks to head coach Steve Cheechoo for helping the Bears win 20 games straight.

The Bears have made their presence known during their second year of competitive hockey. They need the support of the Cree nation to keep them together, strong and to stand with them in providing opportunities to the youth of the future.

If you have questions about the Cree Nation Bears, do not hesitate to contact me, Darlene Cheechoo. The Bears thank all of their supporters!

Don't miss the next issue. C.N.I.T tournament news. 85 teams entered, average 900 hockey and broomball players!! By the time you read this the tournament will have entertained and crowned them all. The organizers of the tournament will probably still be in bed dreaming of ... "How did we manage to fit that schedule?!?!?!".... I salute your efforts. That's hockey for now.

Darlene Cheechoo & Dolores Audet-Washipabano

Bears game schedule:

March 12, 1999 Bears vs. Quevillon in Quevillon at 7 p.m.

March 13 1999 Bears vs. Amos in Amos at 630 p.m.

March 14, 1999 Bears vs. Amos in Barraute at 10 a.m.

March 14, 1999 Bears vs. Val d'Or in Val d'Or at 4: 10 p.m.

March 18, 1999 Bears vs. Quevillon in Quevillon at 7 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

101-BIRTHDAYS

Happy belated birthday to my nephew Jordan salt on Jan. 6 1999, to my sister Brittany Jolly on Jan. 17. Also to my second cousin Delmer Moses on Jan. 17. Especially my niece Kelsie who will be turning one year old on Feb. 7. Waskaganish.

I would like to wish my beautiful niece Crystal Brien on Feb. 28 happy birthday! And I love you. Don't grow up to fast, remember, a niece grows more special every year. Take care and good luck in school. From Mary Loon.

Happy birthday on Valentine's Day to our two cousins who are Jason Jr. in Fort Albany and Willy Johnny in Kawawa. We love you been hope to play together soon! Love, cousins from Montreal, Kyana and Niichikies Vachon Ottereyes.

This special birthday wish goes out to a sweet little girl Alexandrea Coon. Happy birthday mouse. Your growing prettier every year. Jesus loves you and will watch over you. From the Mary Loon.

Wishing a happy belated 21st birthday to a wonderful brother Simeon Dixon. I just want to wish you all the happiness and glad to have the brother like you. Hope you had found on your birthday because it was worth it. Sorry I couldn't be there. Take care brother. Love always, Sherry (in Hull) to

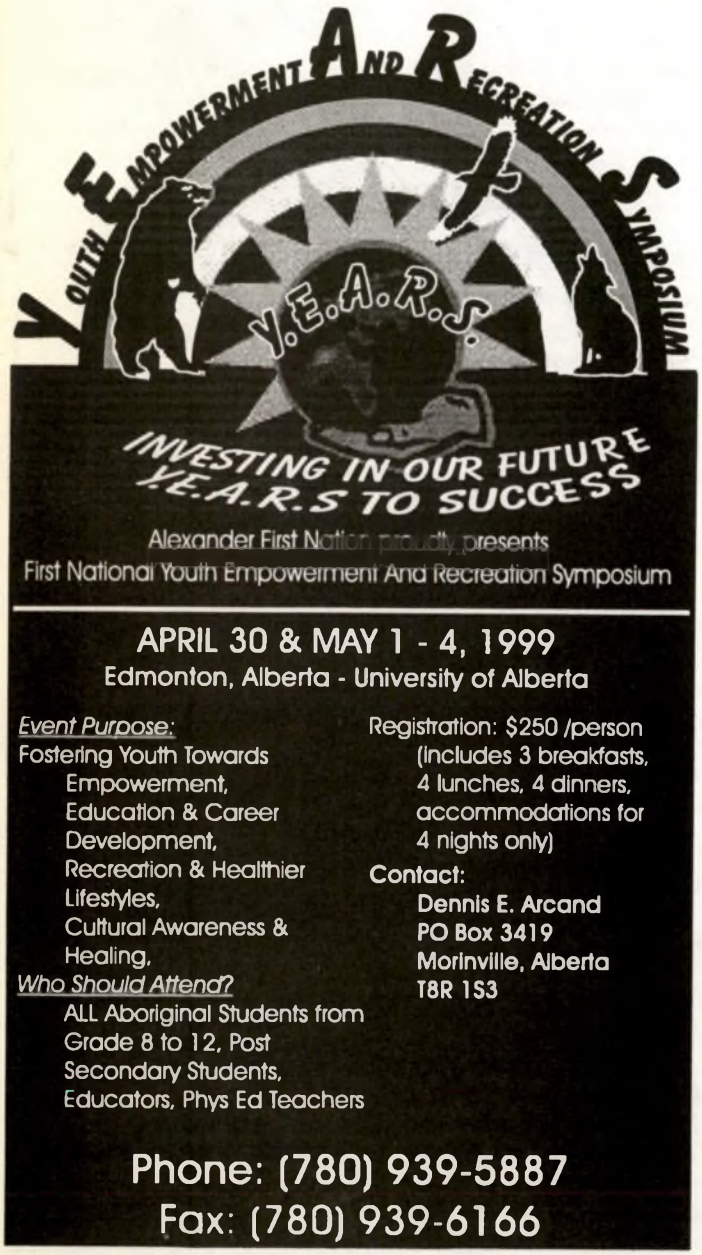
Four years ago on February 12, 1995, a baby boy was brought into this world and now it just seems like yesterday. But when I look at this boy I see that he's turned into a fine young boy, just beginning his journey through this world. And I just prayed to God that he'll take Kyle by the hand and takes good care of him. Love always,aunt Sherry.

A very happy first birthday to a beautiful granddaughter, Kristy Lee Pearl Diamond on Jan. 21. On that day a blessing was given to us. We're glad and Joy to see you grow and do new things and say, everyday. Getting stronger, taking steps to watch you walk by yourself. And having a sweet special smile for the camera. I love you our granddaughter. Love in prayers, Mary and Matthew Loon.

Wishing happiness to a sister of mine, Doreen Brien, birthday on Jan. 30. A sister is a very special friend who shares your joys and tears. Special memories, remember dad's green truck no driver we were yelling, telling Matthew to hurry in. And almost burning our tent down. All the laughter and excitement. Thank you for being a wonderful sister. "Happy birthday" and many more to come. God bless you through the years. Love you, sister Mary Loon.

Happy 14th birthday to our son James Loon on Feb. 10. We wish you all the best of luck in the years to come. Work hard in school and don't give the hard times for you sister. May the Lord keep in watch over you. Love, mom and dad.

For Naomi. I wish you the best for your birthday on March



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CLASSIFIEDS

hopeful that you and I can cross paths someday soon so I can tell you just how much I love you. Anxiously waiting, NM, Mistissini.

103-ANNIVERSARIES

Happy first wedding anniversary to my husband Sam Katapatuk on March 12 1998. First of all I just want to thank our creator, our God above how good of him to bestow on us the gift of love. It's been a year since we said I do. Ever since that day and now there is a new meaning in everything I do because I know you are the reason I'm in love. I love use not only for what you are but for what I am when I am with you. I.e. love you not only forward you have made of yourself but for what you are making of me. I love you for always being the there for me. Happy first wedding anniversary dear I love you always. God bless you! From your loving wife Emma Moses-Katapatuk. Waskaganish, Quebec

Happy first wedding anniversary to our daughter and to our son-in-law Emma and Samuel Katapatuk on March 12 1999. We love you both and we thank the Lord for your marriage to each other. You are a blessing from above and to Sam. Take care of our daughter, you Emma take care of your husband. God bless you both on your anniversary. We are always praying for you. From the mom Clara and dad Abel Moses.

Happy first anniversary to Emma and Sam Katapatuk. We are sending our best wishes to you both on your anniversary. We are happy to see you both coming into our home. We love you all and take care of each other. With love always from grandmother Sarah and from your uncle's Jimmy, Redfern and brother Michael Esau. Waskaganish, Quebec.

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300-PERSONALS

I want to say happy Valentine's Day to Titus Iserhoff in Mistissini. Titus. Hi, how's life in Mistissini. I wish you can be my Valentine. I want you to know you were teasing me. Guess who i am. P.S. See ya! Be mine. You're the one I need. From a secret admirer in Chisasibi.xoxoxooxxoo

I want to say hi to a guy in Mistissini. His name is Blare. Blare hi how's life in Mistissini. It's been long ago since you left Chisasibi. I always wish that I could say goodbye to you when you were here in Chisasibi. When I first saw you I felt love you made me smile. P.S. I love you even though you're not my lover. From a secret admirer in Chisasibi.

I want to say hi to my friends in Mistissini. Maggie and Nellie Brien. Hi girls! How's life in Mistissini. Is it fun? I hope I'll see you girls real soon.Serena. Chisasibi.

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